

Brahmajnana for women

Dr Suvarna Nalapat

in Ancient India



## **Brahmajnana and right of women to achieve it in Ancient India.**

### **Dr Suvarna Nalapat**

A woman's status in any culture and society is determined by the social, intellectual, educational, and spiritual status she enjoys in it. The ability of women for education, war, Yajna participation and in Festivals and day to day activities of household is seen in Rgvedic hymns. The spiritual, and domestic status and even the activities of war of vedic women shows women were helping and doing all the activities their men pursued. This one-pointed concentrated effort of women is mentioned in the Rgveda (6.75.4-5)

**Brahmavadinis** expounders of Brahman kept celibacy throughout life (Maithreyi and Gargi) and even after marriage, Sadyodwahas who studied Veda till they married

**Rishika** which means a female seer of a manthra,

**samana** – word for war, yajna and utsava (festivals). war defensive, protective activity (Goddess paervathy), yajna (spiritual, intellectual-devi saraswathy), Utsava social and cultural activity, which needs lot of wealth (Lakshmi).

Brahmavadini Juhu Rishi (10.109) has Viswadeva as devatha. She gives Vak, again to Brihaspathi who had lost it. (From aphasia back to speech. Punardaaya). Thus Barhaspatya yajnam could be performed with help of Juhu. Vaak is the daughter of Rishi Aambhrina and called Ambhrini (10.125) In this devatha is Paramathma, and rishika Vak says she herself is Parameswari and this suktham is the famous Devisuktha. She

considers herself , moving about with 11 Rudra,8 Aditya, 12 Viswedeva, and protecting Mithra and Varuna, bearing Indra and Aswins ,moon, Thwashta and Poosha with Bhaga and bringing wealth to Yajamana. In this comes the word Raashtree, chikithushee and first among those who do Yajna. She is respected everywhere , Everything seen,heard, and eaten is through her, and all wisdom and knowledge happen through her. It is she who gives Brahmopadesa. She makes the one whom she loves, a Rishi,Kavi and sarvajna. It is she who becomes the string of the bow of Thripuranthaka and fights for him. (10.125. 1-8) She had created the father Paramathma from her from her head. Her yoni is in the oceans. Her cause is Brahmachaithanya. She exists in all elements and everywhere and is cause for all and she cannot be touched by anyone .She moves alone as air everywhere

**Srishtisuktha** (10.72. )has 9 mantras of Adithi , She created Devas as a artisan makes objects. From Avyaktha , the Vyaktha prapancha came out. They got names (creation of sound and language) and were thus identified ( creation of consciousness in humans by name and form and classifying objects by these). Then creation of rain happened

Athryi Viswawara homa, and yajna, Agniputhri apala.(4.11),second union with indra to get a son.

Vishphala ,the relative of King Khela had injured her leg during a fight, Mudgalas wife (Mudgalani) was the army chief of Indra and she became the charioteer of a ox-cart and protected the cattle from enemies

Saswathi, daughter of Angiras was wife of Yaduvansi Asanga , who was a eunuch. She makes her husband virile with the blessings of sage Medhyathithi

Lopamudra , princess of Vidarbha and wife of sage Agastya , and a seer of magic squares (panchadasi)is a Rishika and she too asks for the pleasure of sambhoga and a son

Romasa, daughter of Brihaspathi, (Kaksheevathy Ghosha naama brahmavadini, Urvasi, . Indrani,

### **Incest and its prevention:- Yami**

**Widow marriage**:- (10.40.2) Marrying the brother of dead husband was common practice.. 10.18.8 :- leave the dead one, get up and embrace the living one. . Do not burn yourself with the dead , says the Manthra.In Mahabharatha Madri alone committed Sathi (because of guilty consciousness). The word Sathi originated when daughter of Daksha immolated herself in Daksh's sacrificial fire .But this was not because she was a widow.

**The rights of woman in her house**: Brother has to give her the rightful dues .(1.124.7) If a brother is absent , father is supposed to give her her dues. (3.31) This shows women were ensured social rights of inheritance. Sage Viswamithra (3.31) says the son of a daughter is the person who gives Pinda to ancestors and therefore daughter and her husband should be looked after well. A woman who have no brothers (Abhraathaa) is puthrika and has property rights as a son. (3.11.2). Among Kerala Nambuthiri Brahmins a daughter can give pinda to ancestors.

There is **no child marriage** in Rgveda. Ghosha lives as a maiden in her father's house till she reached adulthood. The rites of marriage were Kshathram, Swayamvaram and Prajapathyam of which prajapathyam was more popular . Vedic hymns are poetry as revelation and scientific

interpretation of it. The four purushartha (Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha) were known to vedic seers .

Women were first rate citizens and enjoyed equality in spiritual rites, defense, education and in festivals. Yet we do not have their own words in detail. Their intellectual and rational thought processes are unavailable. But , so is the state of men. Only very few men and women become intellectually and rationally active and among them only a few person's words survive to posterity. This is a universal law

**Upanishads:- Brihadaranyaka**- To get a scholarly intelligent daughter couple has to take rice and Thila with ghee. That means couple desired to have a female child who is intelligent. Two such women- Gargi daughter of Vachaknu and Sulabha maithreyi , daughter of Rishimithra and second wife of Yajnavalkya. (Ramayana period- Janaka court). Intellectual participation of a woman in a scholarly sabha and knowledge of Brahman (brahmajnanam) seen . It is Gargi who declares Yajnavalkya as a sarvagna . Only a teacher can give a certificate that a person has passed the test of a sabha . 2 chapters for Gargi. The only person who had courage to ask questions to the scholar Yajnavalkya. The first chapter which she asks –Desasambandha proceeding to Desakalasambandha and in the second , she brings in the Bodhathrikona or consciousness or prajnaana thus making a cosmological astronomical and psychological; synchronicity as modern psychologists and astronomers have done. She asks about the 12 mandalas which are Othaprotha (crisscross)like threads of a cloth . The first 6 are related to the external universe .

1, seen objects-world. Gross physical 2. water which is medium of life forms 3. vaayu the vibrating breathing jeeva principle 4. Anthariksha

world of thanmathra of all elements 5.Gandharvaloka –the world of sound or naada waves and vibration 6.Adityaloka the world of quantum light energy of Varna 7.Chandraloka world of mind which has same speed as light and sound 8.Nakshathraloka.world of pure intellect 9.devaloka revelation, enlightenment 10.Indraloka (of Indriyasamvedana) 11.Prajapathy (Kaama)virat loka which is Thamoloka having a Krishnabhaas 12.Thamasaad param Brahmaloka. Subtlest energy field which is vyapanaseela and which exists in everything

The jeeva who starts samvedana with all beings- becomes one with Sarvantharyamin Brahman has swanubhuthi,(self experience through constant experimentation and practice) efficiency of perception of absolute truth, and convey it to others (Vaagdhorani) . Yajnavalkya says:-to speak of unspeakable, to know of unknowable is athivada.

Aksharabrahmana:- Akshara ,Naadabrahma is meditated a saksharabrahman. Two questions of Gargi. Her confidence. Unanimous agreement of sabha showing Gargi's acceptability in entire sabha. Yajnavalkya, which is that principle that is othaprotha beneath earth , beyond dyo, and within dyavaprithwi. What binds these together. (the question is on zygology or binding together).. Here the synchronicity principle introduced.

Carl Gustav Jung:- synchronicity is a phenomenon of cognition of spacetime continuum where time becomes timelessness. (where astronomy ,neurophysiology and psychology meets) Instead of spacetime term akshara is used. Akshara is a neuter gender word .(Sarvatharyamin is a masculine gender word. )If all multiverses including spacetime continuum is considered as a single unit that which is othaprotha on it is called Akaasa. It is not ether as early

scientists of west thought. Akasa has symbols Om kham,Poojya ,sunya zero. It is Brahman and Prakriti as Ardhanareeswara. It is Poornam not empty. When a poornam is subtracted it remains poornam.

Dikdesakaalagathiphalasunyam hi paramartha sath .

Khahara of Bhaskaracharya . 0 Zero is the . Hindsath of early Arabic writers. The Brahma symbol is that for ancient Indians.

5 , 6 mantras repetition of same question. 1,1,1, not a 2. Number, successor of a progression of natural numbers is always one. Eternal repetition of same question by each generation of humans.

Sayanaprapancha seen by each generation , is the same one...

How avachya ( unutterable) is communicated

An answer wherever, in whichever timespace or language - reached by the inquisitive seeker of truth is just a repetition of the same in spacetime. Yajnavalkya has said that Brahman is Avachya. If he fails to answer the question, he will be declared a failure since he could not answer. If he answers also he is a failure since he has said that it is unspeakable. Thus Gargi puts him in a difficult position.

Brahmanas say that it is..... (I am not saying.but Brahmanas before me have said so... A reference quoting ) But he had answered the question.

**Chethanaadhaathu** alone exists (**units of energy** ).

Sanyasa as junction for Brahmavidya in Maithreyibrahmana. (story) Maithreyi is an Important samkhya guru,Naishtika Brahmacharini, guru of Sita and Gurupathni of Videha kings. She alone ventures to Test King Janaka regarding his nonattachment to worldly desires.

## **Chinmathraanugathaath sarvathra chidswaroopam.**

Yajnavalkya , introduced Principles of acoustics in this Upanishad, quoting as examples. Dundubhi (percussion ),Veena(string) and conch (sanka) tubular instrument in which human breath makes sound We perceive the sound of each instrument but not the series of subtle vibrations made by them. Similarly we do not perceive chinmathra but see the objects . Einstein and Doppler came millennia after this to explain these to modern science.

The **sphota of prathibha** in a meditating person is not supernatural but natural according to Sankara since the chinmathra is everywhere and its manifestation in individual is quite natural law of universe. No prapancha different from Prajnaana. Gross universes bubbles or foam on ocean of Brahman (chinmathra). Once we know its Rasa , there is nothing more to know or to enjoy. In absolute truth wisdom concentrated , consciousness of brahmajnaani – vijnatha alone is absolute and ONE. Aham Brahmasmi ,sarvam khalwidam brahma is such an experience. And women were able to achieve this greatest Wisdom right from Vedic Period.

References (Prasthanathraya Bhashya by the author.)

1. Sudhasindhu Commentary and interpretation of 12 major Upanishads
2. Brahmasindhu. Interpretation of Brahmasuthra
3. Souvarnam . Bhagavad Gita commentary